

## 416<sup>th</sup> Eng. Group introduces a Gryphon

Story and photo by Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson  
4<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** – In a transfer of authority ceremony Sunday at the Army Engineer's compound, Bagram was introduced to a Gryphon. The Gryphon is Task Force Gryphon, the 416th Engineer Group, a National Guard unit from Walbridge, Ohio. The new headquarters has command responsibility for the engineering mission for CJTF-180.

"Our mission is to provide command and control for the engineering groups within the CJTF-180 Combine Joint Operations Area," said Col. Allan Rogers, commander of the 416<sup>th</sup> Eng. Group. "That encompasses management projects for the CJOA and assisting the commander's mission of defending and deterring further hostile actions in Afghanistan and set up a stable and secure Afghanistan."

Though TF Gryphon doesn't possess the wings and body of the mythical creature, it's does possess the same strengths and capabilities of that creature to help build a struggling nation.

"Like the Gryphon, the coalition engineers



*Col. Allan Roger, commander of the 416th Engineer Group, passes the unit guidon to Command Sergeant Victor Riley as Col. Tony Cucolo, Director of Combined Staff CJTF 180 on looks in the transfer of authority ceremony Sunday.*

–[from] Korea, Poland and Slovakia and the American forces – all possess multiple strengths and capabilities [that] compliment and enhance each other," said Rogers, as he addressed a tent filled with essential Combined Joint Task Force-180 and coalition forces personnel. "These capabilities will be utilized

within CJTF-180 as it strives to bring stability to, and strengthen democracy in, Afghanistan. The activation of this engineer command will facilitate the exploitation of those capabilities across the [combine joint operations area] ...

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## 704<sup>th</sup> EOD makes Kandahar a safer place

Story by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer  
211<sup>th</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**KANDAHAR, Afghanistan** – Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. With its many conflicts with military forces such as the Russians, Pakistanis, Indians, Iranians, English and Chinese Armies, each force has contributed to the arsenal of landmines littering Afghanistan's many terrain features.

From dusty, lifeless plains to massive overwhelming mountain ranges flowing with rivers and abundant foliage, coalition forces have found weapons caches and a buffet of landmines that have been left behind. These unmapped mechanisms of death lie beneath the earth, aimlessly

awaiting an innocent drifter to cross their path so they can release their plethora of shrapnel. Coalition forces have marched through the mine ridden provinces of Afghanistan time and time again in search of bin Laden and the Taliban.

Thanks to the extremely well-trained men and women of the 704th Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Company from Camp Shelby, Miss., the many mines and weapons caches that they have come across have not had the opportunity to fulfill their purpose.

"Our whole mission here is force protection, no matter who it is," said Capt. Patrick A. Stamm, company commander from Destin, Fla. "We deal with any and every kind of high explosive hazard."

The 704th has been in Afghanistan for five months, and since their

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# World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell

## Powell pleased with Iran, but calls for more measures

(CNN)—U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Tuesday that Iran “seems to be moving in the right direction” with its nuclear power program, but he said the nation must demonstrate that it is not using the technology to develop weapons.

“We can’t be satisfied until Iran has demonstrated that all of the programs it had been pursuing have now been made known to the international community and they are now being brought to a halt,” Powell told reporters at the European Union in Brussels, Belgium.

Iran has said its nuclear technology is intended for purely peaceful purposes.

The International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) 35-member board of directors is set to meet Thursday to discuss steps that could include punitive measures by the United Nations Security Council if Iran is deemed in noncompliance with a September directive to stop all its reprocessing and enrichment activities.

Powell was asked about a draft resolution sponsored by Britain, France and Germany that does not refer to Iran’s noncompliance or the Security Council.

“We have some reservations about the resolution drafted that we have seen, and we’ll be in discussion with our European Union colleagues and other members of the IAEA as to whether or not the resolution is strong enough to convey to the world the difficulties we’ve had with Iran over the years,” he said. “The fact of the matter is that Iran has been in noncompliance. It’s a position the United States has taken for some time.”

While he said he is “pleased Iran seems to be moving in the right direction now,” it must be determined whether “Iran is cooperating fully and openly with the international community.”

Powell said it “remains to be seen” whether the IAEA board can agree to a resolution on Iran.

EU Secretary-General Javier Solana said it is the organization’s objective “to prevent Iran to go nuclear.”

“We want to stop the enrichment process and we want to stop all the elements that can go into ... the development of nuclear capabilities for nonpeaceful means.”



Prince Charles, left, and U.S. Ambassador William Farish greet the Bushes at Heathrow Airport.

## Security tight as Pres. Bush lands in the United Kingdom

LONDON—U.S. President George W. Bush has arrived in London for a three-day state visit, with British police on alert over purported terrorist threats and demonstrators planning massive street protests.

Prince Charles greeted the president and first lady Laura Bush as Air Force One landed at Heathrow Airport Tuesday evening. The Bushes were then flown by helicopter to Buckingham Palace, where they will stay as the guests of Queen Elizabeth II.

Bush will hold talks on Iraq with British Prime Minister Tony Blair during the visit. In a major address Wednesday, the president will defend the invasion and occupation of Iraq, a senior administration official said.

The president will make the case that war is sometimes necessary to defend a nation’s values, but “it is never the first choice,” the official said.

Bush will also reaffirm U.S. support for international alliances that have been the cornerstone of U.S. policy overseas since World War II.

Bush is the first U.S. president to make a full state visit to Britain, officials say, and London police have mounted an unprecedented security operation.

Concrete barriers have been erected outside Buckingham Palace, while the Metropolitan Police have scheduled 14,000 officer shifts to cover the three-day visit — nearly three times as many as originally planned.

Protest organizers raised their estimate for Thursday’s march through central London from 60,000 to 100,000.

Demonstrators plan to topple an effigy of Bush in a display evoking the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein by U.S. forces in Baghdad, organizers said.



Scott Peterson has pleaded innocent to killing his pregnant wife, Laci, 27, and their unborn son.

## Judge rules Scott Peterson to stand trial for murder charges

MODESTO, Calif. — A judge decided Tuesday to bind Scott Peterson over for trial on murder charges in the deaths of his pregnant wife, Laci Peterson, and their unborn child.

The decision — on the 12th day of Peterson’s preliminary hearing — quickly followed the end of the prosecution presentation and the defense decision not to call witnesses — a move that kept Peterson’s ex-mistress, Amber Frey, from testifying before the actual trial.

Peterson’s next court appearance is set for December 3, when he will face arraignment in Stanislaus County court and when the judge will consider a defense request to move the trial to another county.

Peterson has pleaded not guilty. If convicted for the murders of his wife and their unborn child, Peterson, 31, could be sentenced to death.

The prosecution called two investigators Tuesday morning, including one who recorded Peterson’s conversations with Frey starting a week after Christmas Eve, the day officials believe Laci Peterson’s pregnant body was dumped in San Francisco Bay.

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supporting the global war on terrorism.”

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, the 416<sup>th</sup> was chosen to deploy and assist in Operation Enduring Freedom by establishing a central command and control for all non-residual military engineering operations in Afghanistan.

As the headquarters command, the 416<sup>th</sup> will deploy coalition engineer units throughout Afghanistan to complete a number of projects that will help re-build the country.

“We have command and control for the [416<sup>th</sup>], 205<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, the 41<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion along with the coalition partners [the Polish, Korean and Slovakian engineer companies],” said Rogers. “And there is a lot of work to do. There are challenges here, but they are opportunities for American Soldiers and opportunities for Soldiers to learn better techniques from our coalition partners. I think [this operation] will enhance the future working relationships and coalition arrangements with the United States and it’s coalition partners.”

Eyeing the opportunities that lie ahead for the engineers, coalition officials are enthused

about the unified command for engineering projects it now has.

“The advantage of having a central command and control is that it allows our engineers to be a more focused component,” said Col. Tony Cucolo, Director of the combined staff for Combined Joint Task Force 180. “It is so much to be [accomplished]; having a unified command group will help us get projects done faster and more efficiently.”

“In terms of increasing productivity, [we] provide a centralized control point for engineering forces,” said Rogers. “We can do a better job of managing the scarce resources of the entire combine joint operations area. [Having] a centralize point for management for engineer projects rather than having a number of different organization being responsible for troops in project better utilizes our resources.”

Cucolo also noted that having an engineering design management team in Bagram, which is incorporated within the 416<sup>th</sup>, will help increase the number of construction projects that coalition force undertake adding, “Before (the 416<sup>th</sup> assumed command) we had to go outside the theatre and get someone (to help design the

engineering projects) which [lengthened] the time and efficiency of projects, but now we can continue the challenging and dangerous engineer work in Afghanistan at a much faster pace.”

Though the 416<sup>th</sup> is focused on the immediate task of building a better Afghanistan, it is also preparing for the imagery of a nation once its ultimate battle is won.

“Engineers are important on multiple fronts. We have engineers in Bagram, and spread throughout the entire CJOA. We have Sappers that are out with the war fighters assisting those troops in taking the fight to al Qaeda and the Taliban; they’re helping protect those troops as they take the fight to those hostile elements,” said Rogers. “And as the campaign shifts from the fighting (stage) into the stabilization (stage) engineer troops are going to be valuable because they will get out in the community and assist or teach the local nations how to build roads, schools, and clinics or along with plumbing and electrical work (in those schools and clinics). The infrastructure in Afghanistan is lacking and engineers can assist in a number of different ways to improve that infrastructure (now and in the future).”

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arrival here in Kandahar they have successfully helped keep the Soldiers free of any mines and unexploded ordinance (UXO) injuries or fatalities. Their hard work and dedication, which is equally as beneficial as it is a necessity when dealing with mines and UXO’s, makes them one of the most in demand units in the military.

An EOD specialist undergoes a grueling training process, which includes three months of preparatory EOD training at Red Stone Arsenal Ala., followed by eight months of training at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

“When I first got to the school for EOD, I must admit that I was a little overwhelmed,” said Spc. Richard D. Nunley, an EOD specialist from Gilmer, Tx.

The lengthy training session is necessary to produce a knowledgeable and confident soldier, capable of performing the job of properly disposing of explosive ordinance, no matter what the situation or condition.

“The decision to become an EOD specialist isn’t a lighthearted one,” said Stamm, “You’re talking about these guy’s lives here, it’s a pretty intense job that we do.”

Soldiers of the 704<sup>th</sup> have been put to the test during this deployment. Despite the unorthodox manner in which their missions have been conducted, they have adapted accordingly and have overcome any obstacle that has been put before them.

“Being attached to the infantry and Special Forces units has really brought a whole new front to us,” said Sgt. 1st Class John B. Peters, section sergeant For the 704<sup>th</sup>, from Brooksville, Fla. “There have been situations in which our guys have had to do more than just their job while

out on missions, we have to be able to do the job of an infantryman, or a Military Policeman, if need be, and still be able to concentrate and get our job done in the event that we encounter any UXO while we’re out there.”

The 704<sup>th</sup> have found virtually every form of UXO possible in Afghanistan, from simple land mines, to Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), and caches of unused weapons like Rocket Propelled Grenades and conventional rockets.

With each encounter, they use the utmost precaution and awareness to prove why they are elite professionals when it comes to UXO.

“Our main purpose in life is to keep soldiers alive and safe,” said Stamm. “We’re the guys that keep you alive and keep you from hurting yourself with explosive ordinance.”

Many people are not aware of what EOD does or what they are responsible for. But, when considering the fact that Afghanistan is one of the most highly mined countries in the world and that Kandahar has not lost any lives or suffered any injuries related to explosive ordinance, it is clear that the men and women of the 704<sup>th</sup> EOD are the cream of the crop. They exercise the utmost in excellence and precision when protecting the lives of soldiers out in the beautiful but potentially dangerous Afghan country side.

Keeping soldiers alive is a tough job. Rest assured that when the time comes for the 704<sup>th</sup> to return home they will gladly welcome the opportunity to move on and return to their families.

While reminiscing of good times back home, Peters reclines back in his chair and sighs for a moment, then mutters, “It’s going to be nice to be able to drive down to the local catfish house and get something to eat for a change...that’s for sure.”



## Ariana Airlines returns to the skies of Afghanistan

Story by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer  
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**KANDAHAR**, Afghanistan – Kandahar Governor Pashtun, the president of Ariana Airlines, Lt. Col. Robert Duffy of the Provincial Reconstruction Team, Lt. Col. Steven Mahoney of the Air Support Task Force and Col. Larry Swift of the 10th Mountain Division were among the many key individuals in attendance for the inaugural commercial flight of Ariana Airlines' arrival to Kandahar from Kabul, Afghanistan.

This is the first of many weekly flights slated for Kandahar. The reemergence of Ariana Airline flights in Afghanistan is a part of reconstruction efforts by Coalition Forces to help rebuild Afghanistan.

"This is a very important milestone for the company and for Afghanistan," said Mahoney.

The Kandahar International Airport terminal will also be handed back over to the local government, and the Kandahar Air Strip will become a joint civilian and military run airfield in the near future.

"This went ahead of our original schedule," said Mahoney. "We're very pleased."

A ceremony was held after the Boeing 727-200 airliner landed and offloaded passengers from Kabul, including one passenger that hasn't been to his hometown of Kandahar in 35 years. Governor Pashtun, the president of Ariana Airlines, and others spoke on how beneficial Ariana Airlines is to Afghanistan, and outlined future plans for the national airline.

After the ceremony, new passengers arrived and boarded the plane for the flight back to Kabul.

The reemergence of Ariana Airlines is one of many improvements scheduled to help in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and make it a better place for the people here.

"It's a good thing to further help unite the north and the south of Afghanistan" said Mahoney.

## Bagram Air Base MWR presents

### "Training Day"

1530Z at the MWR building:

On his first day on the job as a narcotics officer, a rookie cop works with a rogue detective who isn't what he appears as.

Tomorrow's movie: "Ghost"



## Local weather

### TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
<b>Bagram:</b>	Partly Cloudy H: 54F L: 30F	Mostly Cloudy H: 55F L: 32F
<b>Kandahar:</b>	Dusty H: 55F L: 34F	Haze H: 61F L: 36F
<b>Kabul:</b>	Partly Cloudy H: 55F L: 30F	Mostly Cloudy H: 57F L: 32F
<b>Uzbekistan:</b>	Partly Cloudy H: 52F L: 37F	Mostly Cloudy H: 63F L: 47F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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# Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *SI.com*)

## Buccaneers deactivate Keyshawn

(*SI.com*) – In a stunning move that illustrates just how far Keyshawn Johnson's relationship with Tampa Bay head coach Jon Gruden has deteriorated, the Bucs on Tuesday deactivated the three-time Pro Bowl receiver for the remainder of the season, Johnson's agent said.

The surprise development in essence ends Johnson's four-year tenure with Tampa Bay despite him having four seasons remaining on his \$56 million contract that included a \$13 million signing bonus.

Asked if he ever imagined that Johnson's personality conflict with Gruden would result in this drastic measure, agent Jerome Stanley said: "No, we never could have dreamed this."

"I don't think anybody likes this. I'm sure even coach Gruden wished it hadn't worked out like this, but he just doesn't want to work with Keyshawn any more."

According to Stanley, there was no flash point or final straw that resulted in the end of Johnson and Gruden's relationship. It was instead an accumulation of factors, the agent said.

"He had a great run with the Bucs and he's looking forward to contributing to whoever is his next team," Stanley added.

Johnson is Tampa Bay's second-leading receiver with 600 yards on 45 catches, including three for touchdowns. For his career, Johnson has 603 receptions for 7,936 yards and 48 TDs.

Stanley broke the news to Johnson, who did not have to report to the team complex Tuesday, the league's off day for players.

"No one's explained to me why," Johnson told WFAN-AM radio in New York. "No one's told me anything. I'll know more later on."



**Keyshawn Johnson**

## Bryant prosecutors gearing up for fight

**DENVER** – The team of prosecutors working on the sexual assault case against NBA star Kobe Bryant is growing.

The Jefferson County district attorney has agreed to let Dana Easter help his counterpart in Eagle County work on the case. Easter, a former nurse, specializes in crimes against children and sex crimes.

Legal experts said prosecutors were apparently gearing up for a court fight against Bryant's experienced defense team, Hal Haddon and Pamela Mackey.

"They're not surrendering, in fact, they're looking for reinforcements," Denver defense attorney Scott Robinson said Tuesday. "I don't think it's fair to see this as anything but an indication that the prosecution isn't going to go down without a fight."

Easter, 48, worked as a nurse for several years before joining the

Jefferson County district attorney's office in the late 1980s, spokeswoman Pam Russell said. She was a founding member of a team made up to ensure consistency in handling sexual assault cases.

Easter also helped develop a standardized way of collecting rape evidence and works on the state's Ending Violence Against Women project, which trains law enforcement officers, victims' advocates and prosecutors in handling sex assault and domestic violence crimes.

## Top-ranked UConn trails at halftime, outlasts spunky Ivy League foe 70-60

**STORRS, Conn.** – Connecticut needed 20 minutes to start looking like the No. 1 team in the country.

The Huskies rallied from a three-point halftime deficit to beat Yale 70-60 Monday night in the opening round of the Preseason NIT.

It was better than the only other time Connecticut was a pre-season No. 1. The Huskies opened the 1999-00 season with a 70-68 loss to Iowa in the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic.

"We've been through this before with great teams and with not so great teams," Huskies coach Jim Calhoun said. "We were not prepared to pay the price initially."

The undermanned Bulldogs used a patient offense to spread the floor and keep the Huskies from getting out on the break.

That changed in the second half as the Huskies used a 14-2 run to take a 48-37 lead and they went on to lead by as many as 17 before struggling at the free-throw line in the final 4 1/2 minutes.

"That was an untraditional game," Calhoun said. "We're going to have to be different teams different nights. This will be a work in progress not in terms of talent but with different roles."

Emeka Okafor, the AP's preseason player of the year, had 21 points and 13 rebounds to lead Connecticut, which will host Nevada in the second round Wednesday night.

"Pick after pick after pick and all of a sudden they just score on the very last second," the junior center said of Yale's offense. "That's just a blow to your morale."

Calhoun let his team know at halftime that it was time to be one of those different teams. He called it a one-way discussion.

"Coach came in there at screamed at us and told us what we had to do," Connecticut guard Taliek Brown said. "We had to play harder and bring energy to the game. That's what we did in the second half."



**Ben Gordon led the Huskies with six assists to go with his 13 points.**

# Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

## Taliban say they killed U.N. woman

**SPIN BOLDAK**, Afghanistan (*Reuters*) – Taliban guerrillas said on Tuesday they killed a French U.N. worker in Afghanistan at the weekend and threatened to execute a Turkish road engineer unless the government freed jailed comrades.

A guerrilla commander also warned that anyone seen to be assisting U.S. interests in Afghanistan would be targets for future attacks, including journalists and aid workers.

Referring to Sunday's killing of 29-year-old U.N. refugee agency official Bettina Goislard in Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, Taliban spokesman Mullah Abdul Samad told Reuters.

"Yes we did that; our guerrillas were involved in killing that Christian woman. We have confirmed information that most of the foreigners working in our country are American agents and have no sympathy for Afghanistan.

"We will not spare them. They are not doing anything for common Afghans but are preaching Christianity in Afghanistan or spying against the Taliban."

The murder of Goislard has upped the stakes in the Taliban's battle with the Western-backed government of President Hamid Karzai and the foreign presence in Afghanistan. It also underlined the Taliban's ability to carry out attacks with impunity in large parts of the south and east of the country.

Another Taliban spokesman, Hamid Agha, denied the group was involved in Goislard's killing, saying such attacks were carried by local authorities and those seeking to "defame" the Taliban.

He said the Taliban had "no problem" with foreigners or Afghans working for U.N. agencies and targeted only U.S.-led forces and NATO peacekeepers who came to harm Afghanistan.

However, his comments are contradicted by numerous reports to the contrary from government officials, local people and U.N. officials, who have blamed the Taliban for repeated attacks on soft targets such as aid workers.

Goislard, shot in broad daylight by two men on a motorcycle, was the first U.N. international staff member killed since the overthrow of the Taliban by U.S.-led forces two years ago.

## Mine-clearance agency's driver abducted

**KABUL**, Afghanistan (*IRIN*) – Two days after the murder of a UN staff member by armed men in the southern city of Ghazni, a driver for a mine-clearance agency was abducted by gunmen from the centre of the same city on Monday. He was later released.

The United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA) told *IRIN* that the incident had occurred when a vehicle belonging to the Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDC) (an implementing partner of UNMACA) and its driver were stopped as it was returning from the field.

"At around five o'clock in the evening, a vehicle from MDC was return-

ing to its camp in Ghazni city when two persons on a motorcycle and two other persons [all armed] stopped the vehicle [in the city] and abducted the driver and his vehicle and drove 10 km northwest of Ghazni, where they were met by another eight people [allies of the abductors]," Patrick Fruchet, a UNMACA external relations officer, said. Subsequently, the driver was released after being robbed and the vehicle driven away.

The incident follows a series of serious security incidents involving aid agencies and UN organisations over the last eight days in the south of the country. On 11 November, a vehicle belonging to the mine clearance-agency, Handicap International-Belgium, with two national staff on board, hit a newly laid landmine near the southern city of Kandahar, which was followed by a car bomb attack in the afternoon of the same day at the regional office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in Kandahar.

The last and most alarming, however, was the murder on Sunday of a UN staff member, Bettina Goislard, a 29-year-old French national working for the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has drawn strong condemnation from the UN, the Afghan government and the aid community at large.

The aid bodies in southern Afghanistan reacted strongly to the incident, and held an emergency meeting on Monday to consider their options, which might include their temporary withdrawal from the region, according to a statement released following the meeting, from Kandahar on Tuesday.

"In the last six months, aid agencies operating in the south have seen their offices attacked, their national staff threatened and kidnapped and dedicated national staff killed," said Martin Lagneau, the director of Handicap International-Belgium, in the statement.

According to the Afghan NGOs Security Office (ANSO), these incidents not only indicated the breadth of attacks, which were escalating, on the UN, NGOs, government and the US-led coalition forces "but also that more precise and ruthless methods are being employed", said Fritz Prax, ANSO's coordinator for the southern region, in the statement.

## A note from the editor...

We will be filming Holiday Greetings for soldiers from the greater New York City viewing area (WABC-TV) on Friday from 1100L to 1300L behind Motel 6, Bldg. 815, and will be filming holiday greetings for soldiers from the Fort Drum area on Friday as well from 1300L to 1500L in the same location.

We are only able to film greetings for these areas at this time as special arrangements have been made with the media in those two locations. The AFN team has already been here and will not be returning.